

General Comments on Shuttle Policy Statement

The execution of a policy statement is somewhat premature since a study is going to be undertaken. The study terms of reference highlight a number of issues, the resolution of which could have the effect of countermanding the proposed policy statement.

Each major section of the study has the potential for changing the current policy. For example, the proposed policy statement asserts the primacy of the Shuttle as U.S. launch system, while the proposed study intends to raise the issue of maintaining an ELV capability in parallel with the Shuttle.

Also, the preeminence of NASA and the Air Force for Shuttle operations asserted in the policy statement is to be addressed by the study with various options to be evaluated including turning Shuttle over to the private sector for operation.

However, acceding to the policy statement raises no problems, so long as the study is undertaken, and the statement that "the transition to the Shuttle should occur as expeditiously as practical" is understood to mean that ample consideration will be given to the risks of total dependence on the Shuttle through the transition period.

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